

**BEFORE THE
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

DOCKET NO. 2011-____-C

In the Matter of the Application of)	
Midwestern Telecommunications,)	
Incorporated, d/b/a M.T.I. for Additional)	PETITION FOR ADDITIONAL
Designation as a Wireless Eligible)	DESIGNATION AS A WIRELESS ELIGIBLE
Telecommunications Carrier Pursuant to)	TELECOMMUNICATIONS CARRIER
47 U.S.C. § 214(e))	

Midwestern Telecommunications, Incorporated, d/b/a “M.T.I.” (“M.T.I.” or the “Company”), pursuant to section 214(e)(2) of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended (“Act”), 47 U.S.C. § 214(e)(2), and S.C Code Ann. Regs. 103-690 (Supp. 2008), hereby petitions the Public Service Commission of South Carolina (“Commission”) for additional designation as a wireless eligible telecommunications carrier (“ETC”) in the State of South Carolina.

M.T.I. seeks this additional ETC designation in South Carolina only for purposes of participation in the federal Universal Service Fund’s (“USF”) Lifeline and Link-Up programs. M.T.I. does not seek ETC designation to offer services supported by the USF “high-cost” program. M.T.I. satisfies the requirements for designation as a wireless ETC in the State of South Carolina. Because of the public interest benefits for the State of South Carolina, and because this Commission has previously granted ETC Designation to M.T.I. on a wireline basis, the Company respectfully requests that the Commission expeditiously approve this Petition.

I. BACKGROUND

A. The Company

M.T.I. is a competitive local exchange carrier (“CLEC”) and wireless provider headquartered in Chicago Heights, Michigan, and was authorized to provide local exchange services in South Carolina on March 12, 2003 via Order No. 2003-124 issued in Docket No.

2002-381-C. MTI is currently certified to provide local exchange services in 14 states.

Additionally, the Commission has already designated MTI as a wireline ETC for purposes of offering Lifeline and Link-Up support, by Order No. 2007-763 issued in Docket No. 2007-32.

B. Previous ETC Designations

M.T.I. has been designated as a “wireline ETC” in the states of Alabama, Florida, Illinois, Michigan, South Carolina, and Wisconsin. In addition, M.T.I. has been designated as a “wireless ETC” in the states of Illinois and Wisconsin.

C. M.T.I.’s Proposed ETC Service Area

M.T.I. is not a “rural telephone company” as that term is defined by Section 153(37) of the Act. Pursuant to Section 54.207(a) of the FCC’s Rules, a “service area” is a “geographic area” established by a state commission for the purpose of determining universal service obligations and support mechanisms. For non-rural service areas, there are no restrictions on how a state commission defines the “service area” for purposes of designating a competitive E.T.C. Therefore, M.T.I. requests wireless ETC designation in all the non-rural wire centers of BellSouth Telecommunications, Inc. d/b/a AT&T South Carolina. M.T.I. does not request ETC designation in any rural area at this time. Attached as **Exhibit One** is a list of the AT&T wire centers for which M.T.I. seeks ETC designation.

For wireline services, M.T.I. currently utilizes certification and verification safeguards to ensure that ineligible subscribers are prevented from receiving multiple Link-Up and Lifeline subsidies at the same address, in accordance with 47 C.F.R. § 54.411(c). Should the Commission grant this Petition, M.T.I. will maintain those same safeguards with respect to wireless services.

D. M.T.I. Requests ETC Designation for Participation in the Lifeline and Link-Up Programs

M.T.I. requests additional ETC designation in South Carolina in order to receive Lifeline and Link-Up support as a prepaid wireless carrier. Consistent with its previous ETC petition before the Commission, and its current operation as a wireline ETC, MTI will not seek to provide services supported by the USF's high-cost program.

E. Description of Lifeline Offering

MTI's plan offers eligible customers 68 prepaid minutes per month at no charge to the customer, as well as access to the following features: Call Waiting, Caller ID, Voicemail, 3-Way Calling, and Text messages (charged at 1/3 minute per text [in or out]). Those "free" minutes unused by a customer in a given month "roll over" until the account is closed.

After the first 68 minutes are consumed, eligible customers will have the option to purchase minutes, for use in making standard cellular calls or texts, at the following rates:

\$5.00 denomination - \$0.17 per minute of use;
\$10.00 denomination - \$0.075 per minute of use;
\$20.00 denomination - \$0.053 per minute of use;
\$50.00 denomination - \$0.050 per minute of use.

II. M.T.I. SATISFIES THE REQUIREMENTS FOR DESIGNATION AS A WIRELESS ETC

A. M.T.I. Will Offer the Services Required by the Act

M.T.I. will provide all the services that are eligible for universal service support, as described in 47 C.F.R. § 54.101, including 1) voice-grade access to the public switched telephone network; 2) local usage; 3) dual tone multi-frequency signaling or its functional equivalent; 4) single party service or its functional equivalent; 5) access to emergency services; 6) access to operator services; 7) access to interexchange services; 8) access to directory assistance; and 9) toll limitation for qualifying low income customers. M.T.I. will make these

services available to any qualifying South Carolina customer within the areas where M.T.I. operates.

B. M.T.I. Meets the Requirements of S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 103-690

Pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 103-690.C (a)(1)(A), M.T.I. will provide its services throughout its service area to all customers making a reasonable request for service.

S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 103-690.C (a)(1)(C) requires an applicant to submit a two-year plan “describing the carrier’s plans for advertising and outreach programs for identifying, qualifying, and enrolling eligible participants in the Lifeline and Link-Up programs.” Attached as **Exhibit Two** is the required marketing plan.

M.T.I. is able to remain functional in emergency situations as required by S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 103-690.C (a)(2). Because M.T.I. will lease facilities from a facilities-based wireless carrier (Sprint) to serve its customers, M.T.I. has the same ability to remain functional in emergency situations as Sprint. Likewise, Sprint’s network has reasonable amounts of back-up power to ensure functionality without an external power source, and has implemented reasonable practices to reroute traffic around damaged facilities and manage traffic spikes resulting from emergency situations.

S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 103-690.C (a)(3) requires an Applicant to demonstrate that it will satisfy applicable consumer protection and service quality standards. M.T.I. commits to comply with the Cellular Telecommunications and Internet Association’s Consumer Code for Wireless Service. M.T.I. also commits to not use, disclosure or permit access to, Customer Proprietary Network Information (“CPNI”) except as permitted under 47 U.S.C. § 222(d), except as otherwise required by law pursuant to 47 U.S.C. § 222(c)(1) or except as permitted under 47 U.S.C. §§ 222(c)(1)(A) and 222(c)(1)(B).

S.C. Code Ann. Regs. §103-690.C (a)(4) requires an Applicant to offer a local usage plan comparable to the one offered by the incumbent LEC in its service area. M.T.I.'s services offerings meet this requirement. M.T.I.'s Lifeline customers will receive specified amounts of wireless calling – local and long distance – with no monthly recurring charge or other fees whatsoever. M.T.I.'s Lifeline Wireless Plan includes sixty-eight (68) minutes of free local and long distance calls with five features. Unused free minutes roll over, and additional minutes are available at the competitive rates described above.

S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 103-690.C (a)(5) requires M.T.I. to “certify by affidavit that the carrier acknowledges that the Federal Communications Commission may require it to provide equal access to long distance carriers in the event that no other eligible telecommunications carrier is providing equal access in the service area. See the Affidavit of Jerry Holt attached as **Exhibit Three**.

Pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 103-690.C (a)(6), M.T.I. certifies via the affidavit attached as **Exhibit Three** that it will offer the services that are supported by the federal universal service support mechanisms by using its own facilities or a combination of its own facilities and resale of another carrier's services. MTI provides Directory Assistance service via its own facilities (a switch and call controller located in California), and provides the other services via resale of other carriers' services.

Pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 103-690.C (a)(7), M.T.I. certifies via the affidavit attached as **Exhibit Three** that it will advertise in media of general distribution the availability of Lifeline and Link-Up services, as well as the applicable charges associated therewith.

III. DESIGNATION OF M.T.I. AS AN ETC WOULD PROMOTE THE PUBLIC INTEREST, CONSISTENT WITH S.C. CODE ANN. REGS. § 103-690.C(b).

Granting M.T.I. additional ETC Designation for low income support related to its wireless offerings will promote additional deployment of M.T.I.'s offerings in the areas served by AT&T South Carolina. M.T.I. offers quality services at affordable prices, and adds another choice of wireless provider in the AT&T service areas of South Carolina. Additionally, ETC status will allow M.T.I. to offer wireless service to many low income customers who may not have been able to have service but for the Company.

IV. CONCLUSION

As discussed above, designation of M.T.I. as a wireless ETC in the State of South Carolina is consistent with the requirements the Act, the FCC's regulations, and the Commission's regulations. Designation is also in the public interest.

WHEREFORE, for all of the foregoing reasons, M.T.I. respectfully requests that the Commission designate M.T.I. as a wireless ETC in the State of South Carolina solely for purposes of participating in the Lifeline and Link-Up programs, and grant such other relief as is just and proper.

[signature page to follow]

Respectfully submitted,

Midwestern Telecommunications,
Incorporated

s/ John J. Pringle, Jr.

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Columbia, South Carolina